EBENEZER;

OR, A

Monument of Thankfulneſs.

BEING

A True Account of a late Miraculous Preſervation of Nine Men in a ſmall Boat which was incloſed within Iſlands of Ice about Seventy Leagues from Land, and continuing in Diſtreſs Twenty eight Days.

Drawn up

By *Allen Geare*, who was a Principal Sharer both in the Miſery and the Mercy.

PSAL. iii. ii.

The Works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.

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THE

PREFACE

WHilſt deep and lively Impreſſions of a ſignal Mercy are freſh in our Minds and Memories, it is doubtleſs the fitteſt Seaſon then to record the Works of God. I have therefore taken this firſt Opportunity to manifeſt my grateful Senſe of a late wonderful preſervation vouchſafed to me and ſome few others which I chooſe to have in Print, that it may be a perpetual Remembrancer to us of ſo amazing a Deliverance: and that it may alſo be an Encouragement to others (eſpecially Sea-faring Men) to put their truſt in God who alone can deliver after this ſort. I have written this Narrative in a moſt plain and vulgar Stile, that it may be underſtood by the meaneſt capacity, nothing but the Glory of God and the benefit of Mankind being aimed at by

46-1-8-123

BRITISH MUSEUM

Allen Gear

A BRIEF RELATION OF THE Most Remarkable PASSAGES which hapned in our Voyage from *Plymouth* to the *Newfoundland*, in the *Langdon* Frigate, Capt. *Arthur Holdworth*, Commander.

Feb. 27, 170$\frac{6}{7}$.

WE Sailed from *Plimouth* under Convoy of her Majesties Ship St. *Albans*, and two other Ships of War, together with a Fleet of Merchant Ships bound to the *Mediterranean*, having a fresh Gale in the North East Quarter; the Wind continuing, we kept

the ſaid Fleet Company till we were One hundred and twenty Leagues to the Weſtward; then judging our ſelves clear of Privateers, proceeded in our Voyage; but e'er we got three hundred Leagues weſting, the Wind veering weſterly, in our traverſing, the 17th of *March*, we came up with an Engliſh built Ship of about two hundred Tuns and twelve Guns mounted, having a Jury-Main-Maſt, and at our approach hoiſed an Engliſh Enſign, who being hail'd, told us, he came from *Virginia*, and belonged to *London*, whither he was alſo bound; which ſeemed very probable, ſeeing he had many Tame Fowl on board, and a Red-Bird flew from her to us.

Our Captain ſeeing him diſabled, deſired him to bring to, and if he wanted any thing, would hoiſe out our Boat and bring it him; but he obſtinately refuſed, and told us our

Boat

Boat ſhould not come on board, and unleſs we would keep further off, he would fire into us. Thoſe moroſe Words cauſed our Captain to ſuſpect him, wherefore we forthwith ran up with him, and commanded him to bring to. At this he preſently fired on us, and fought us from Eleven in the Morning till Six in the Evening, then, being much torn, Struck, and deſired us to ſave their Lives, but too late; for the Wind increaſing, made a great Sea, which forced our Ship under a reev'd main ſail that we could by no means hoiſe out our Boat, without hazard of our own lives, but by vertue of a Light he carry'd, we kept cloſe to him, intending, if we had opportunity, to hoiſe out our Boat: but towards midnight his Light ſeem'd very low, and by a great cry which was heard about One of the Clock, we judge, ſhe Founder'd. He told us

when

when he ſtruck, that he had fourteen Frenchmen on board; ſo that we conjecture he was an Engliſh Virginia-Man taken by the French, and had loſt her Main-Maſt in the Engagement. We followed him in Chace and Fight about thirty Leagues, and when he ſtruck we were in the Latitude of Forty five Degrees and Fifty Min.

Having thus loſt our Booty, we made the beſt of our way to the *Newfoundland*, being bound thither of a Fiſhing Voyage. But as one Trouble ſeldom comes alone, ſo it hapned to us; for on the 26th of the foreſaid Month of *March*, having ground in Seventy five Fathom; by Obſervation Forty ſix Deg. Fifty Min. by Eſtimation Fifty Leagues off, (tho' it proved to Seventy Leagues at Four in the Afternoon) we ſaw ſome ſhatterd Ice, which we all ſuppos'd to be the Harbour Ice broken up. However

ever the Wind being at Eaſt, handed our Topſails, and ſtood to the Northward with our Courſes, hoping e'er Night to get clear; but finding rather more than leſs, tacked to the Southward, yet no alteration: Wherefore for our better Security, we furl'd our Foreſail and brought to with our Mainſail (night approaching, and a dead Wind, that we could lie off upon neither Tack) hoping if we ſhould happen amongſt greater Ice, we might fall the eaſier.

About eight or nine of the Clock we diſcovered a Land of Ice, which altho' we endeavour'd to ſhun, by backing our Mainſail, yet all to no purpoſe, for we fell into it; and notwithſtanding all our contrivance to hang out Cables, queels of Ropes, Hoops, &c. overboard to defend our Ship, yet about eleven of the Clock, amongſt many ſtripes, ſhe receiv'd one

one unhappy blow near the Garber, which bilg'd her, ſo that by two Pumps, and Bealing at three ſeveral Hatchways, we had much difficulty to keep her till Day. However, the Water gained little upon us this Night.

Day coming on, and our Men much fatigued, the Water increaſed, ſo that by Noon the Hold was half full. Now every Man is at his Wits end, not knowing what to adviſe each other, all hopes of Life being paſt: we continued pumping, though to little purpoſe, and concluded, that as we were all born to die, ſo, if God had appointed this the time, we would ſubmit to his Will, and die patiently.

In the midſt of this fatal Stroke, every one deſpairing of Life, it pleaſed God to put it into the thoughts of ſome of us, that God could work Wonders, and that the Boat might

be

be a ſecond Means to preſerve ſome: Wherefore it was moved to the Captain to hoiſe her out, and commit ſome of us to her in hopes.

The Captain's Reply was, That tho' it was true God could work Wonders, yet it was improbable ſo ſmall a Boat ſhould preſerve us, and that it was but living a few Days longer in Miſery, and ſeeing God had allotted for him this Calamity, he reſolved to take his Lot and Die with his Men: Nevertheleſs being much importuned, he ordered the Boat out, and *William Saunders* and five others in her; and that the Men might not ſuſpect the Deſign, it was given out that the Boat ſhould go a head to Tow the Ship clear of the Ice, which how likely that was let the Reader judge, we having but one Oar, all the reſt being broken by defending the

Ship from the Ice; yet the Deſign went on.

The Boat being out, and finding no good to be done in Towing the Ship, fell aſtern, intending to take in the Captain and as many as it could conveniently carry; whilſt ſome were preparing Neceſſaries for a miſerable Voyage, a Compaſs was convey'd into the Boat, and other Things ready. The Captain, Doctor, and ſeveral others being gotten at the Cabbin Windows and Galleries, I amongſt the reſt endeavoured to get out at the Gallery alſo, intending (if poſſible) to get into the Boat, but being diſcover'd by the Men, they got the Small Arms and kept off the Boat, reſolving, ſeeing the Boat could not preſerve all, that all ſhould periſh together.

Being thus fruſtrated in the Deſign, every one got into the Ship again except my ſelf and *William Langmead*, who

who were got ſo low that we could not recover our ſelves, neither would any one hall us in. A deſperate Diſeaſe muſt have a deſperate Cure. Hanging ſo long as we could, and no one endeavouring to relieve us we were forced to let go our hold and truſt to the Mercy of them in the Boat, who ſeeing us Swimming towards them, hove a Rope to us, and took us in.

Now we are eight in number in the Boat, who willing to ſave our Captain, lay hovering about the Ship till Night: but the Men continuing their Reſolution, fired at the Boat and kept her off; Night approaching, we began to ſeek ſhelter, and accordingly went among the ſhatter'd Ice, and made faſt our Boat to a ſmall lump of Ice and drave with it, and as we drave foul of great Ice, would remove

and make faſt to another lump and ſo lay all Night.

In the Morning, looking abroad, we eſpied our Ship about three Leagues to the Faſtward, in the ſame manner as we left her; whereupon a Conſultation was held whether we ſhould return and make another Attempt to ſave the Captain and as many as poſſible; it was carried in the Negative, every one alledging the Men would fire on us; or elſe ran preposterouſly into the Boat and ſink her; ſo that it was reſolved to make the beſt of our way to the ſhoar. But I, conſidering how little it would tend to my Honour to ſave my Life and ſee my Captain periſh, endeavoured to perſwade them that the Ship ſwam buyant, and did hope they had ſtop'd the Leak, and we might proceed on our Voyage, but this would take no effect. When I ſaw I could not

not prevail that way, I desired them to row up, and set me upon that part of the Ice next the Ship, and I would walk to the Ship and die with my Commander. This was unanimously agreed to, and accordingly we rowed to the said Ice; but when we came thither, I was loth to go out. However, calling the Captain to us, Mr. *John Maddick* came first, and after him the Doctor and some others, which the Captain perceiving, came also. The Captain being gone, the Multitude ran so preposterously after him, that we had like to have spoil'd all: But by chance we got off the Boat, having in her and hanging to her Sides 21 in Number. Some we were forced to slip, others perisht upon the said Ice, being not able to return to the Ship; the rest perisht in the Ship. Now we began to consider

ſider what Courſe to take, and we conclude to make for the Shore.

March the 28th. We took a miſerable Farewel of our diſtreſſed Brethren; every one's Heart ſo laden with his own Miſery, as to have little room to pity another.

We had no other Proviſion than a ſmall Barrel of Flower and a five Gallon Runlet of Brandy, which being thrown overboard, we took up. We alſo took up an old Cheſt, which ſtood us in good ſtead: For, having (as before hinted) but one Oar, by chance our Ship's Handſpikes and a Hatchet were in the Boat: We would ſplit the Cheſt and nail it to the Handſpikes, which were our Oars. Nails we had none but what we drew from ſundry Places in the Boat. The reſt of the Cheſt would ſerve to kindle our Fire. It alſo hapned that our main Tarpauling, being newly tarred, was

was laid in our Boat, which was our Mainſail; and an old piece of Canvas, which had been a little Yall's Sail, was our Fore-ſail. In this Condition we put for the Shore, and ſeeing the Ice which incloſed us lay North and South, we ſteer'd North, and in the Morning got clear.

Now being got into the Ocean, we having ſtill the Wind Eaſtwardly, hoiſed our Sails, and ſteered W. N. W. about 14 Leagues, then fell in with another Land of Ice, and attempting to ſail through, we were incloſed by the many great Iſlands which drave ſo faſt together, that we were forc'd to hall up our Boat upon the ſaid Ice, or elſe muſt inevitably periſh.

Here we lay with our little Frigat eleven Days, without ſight of the Sea. This Ice being very hard, we took what Seals we would, there being

ing great Plenty of this Creature: We made the Skin our Fire-hearth; the Fat would burn ſo freely, that we would therewith boil the Lean.

Lying in this Cold Region ſo long, our Men began to complain in their Feet, and our Boat too little to afford us all room, there was always a hideous Cry among us, That we did hurt each other, but no Remedy. We kept watch Six and Six for conveniency of room, and alſo to beware the Ice did not break under our Boat, which would often happen; then muſt we lanch our Boat till we found a convenient Place which we thought ſtrong enough to bear the Boat.

At the end of eleven Days we ſaw the Sea, and tho' with no ſmall Difficulty, yet lanch'd our Boat into it, ſailing as before N. N. W. about ten or twelve Leagues farther; then

were

were incloſed again, and after that manner five ſeveral times.

But this laſt Ice was worſe than the former, for here the Ice was looſe, and tho' ſo thick, we could not force our Boat through, yet not ſo ſolid as to bear the weight of a Man, ſo that although we daily ſaw Seals enough, yet could take none.

It ſo happily fell out, that we had Seven Seals in Store when we parted from the hard Ice, and one we took up dead, which went down without queſtioning how he dyed.

Now we are neceſſitated to be at ſhort Allowance, having but one amongſt us for two days, which, with about 3 Ounces of the Flower abovementioned mixt with Water

and boiled upon the Fat of the Seal, was forced to ſerve.

Note, That the Seal is a Creature of a ſmall Body when the Skin is off.

Now we are obliged to ſhare Fat, Skin and all, every one allowing a little Fat to make a Fire. Here we were ſo hard put to it, that we were conſtrained to eat Skin, Bones and all, ſcarce affording to boil it. This made us ſo Coſtive, that ſome of our Company died. I, my ſelf, did not eaſe my Body in 18 Days, and yet it pleaſed the Lord to ſpare me.

When we were clear of the Lands of Ice, and were put into the Sea, if the Wind were contrary or blew ſo hard that we could not row, we would bear away to a great Iſland of Ice

Ice and cut a Nook with our Hatchet, and make faſt our Boat to it, and lie till better Weather.

And though here we had Shelter, yet were we often in great Danger by other great Iſlands which did drive foul of us, inſomuch, that it was aſtoniſhing to think we ſhould be preſerved.

Our drink was the Ice and a dram of the Brandy out of a hole made with a fourpenny Nail. Our Proviſion being grown ſcarce, it pleaſed God to ſave ſome of us by taking others to himſelf: For now they began to die two or three in a Day, till we were reduced to Nine, ſo that with good Management our Proviſion carryed us to the Shore.

Several of thoſe that died in the Boat were ſo burnt in their Feet, that when they were Stript (which we always did to keep the Survivers warm with their Cloaths) we ſhould pull off their Toes vvith their Stockings. The laſt that died vvas the Boatſvvain, vvho lived till a day before vve ſavv the Land.

The laſt Shelf of Ice vve paſt through, happened to break our Compaſs; and ſoon after vve loſt our Water-Bucket, vvhich vvas our Pump, ſo that novv, tho' 40 Leagues from Shore, vve vvere forced to direct our Courſe by the Heavens, *viz.* by the Sun by Day, and Stars by Night.

Many other ſad Accidents befell us, too tedious to relate: Yet after all this variety of Diſtreſs, it pleaſed the

the Lord to bring Nine of us ſafe to Land, having been 28 days in this little Boat under ſuch diſmal Circumſtances as above recited.

April 24, We arrived at *Baccalew*, and forthvvith vvent to the Bay of *Verds*, vvhere vve found 3 Men providing for a Fiſhing-Voyage. Theſe Men carry'd us to their Houſe, and gave us ſuch Things as they had, *viz.* a little Bread, a Meal of Peaſe, and each of us a dram of Rum, which did a little revive us: We had alſo a Fire made, before which we all lay down and ſlept heartily, tho' the Snow was very thick.

Our Benefactors here being badly ſtor'd and not able to ſuſtain us, the Wind being at N. E. we concluded to go for S. *John*'s, tho' we were ſo much burnt, that ſome of us were forced

forced to be carryed into the Boat. But e'er we got the length of Cape S. *Francis*, the Wind veer'd to S. W. ſo that we were compelled in that low Condition, to row all Night, and in the Morning got to *Portugal* Cove, where we found ſome Men making Preparations for the Summer's Fiſhing. The unſpeakable Joy that each of us had at the ſight of theſe Men, I cannot expreſs: For they had ſo much Compaſſion on us, as to lanch a Boat and towed us over to *Beliſle*, where we were received very courteouſly, every one of us being ſo weak, that we were forced to be carryed a-ſhore on Mens Shoulders.

Here we tarry'd Ten days, and being ſomething recruited, went for S. *John*'s.

Note,

Note, When we landed at *Beliſle*, we were ſo disfigured with Hunger, Cold, and the Oil of the Seals, that we appeared as Monſters rather than Men, of which nothing but the Shape was left; yet, in all this Extremity, God miraculouſly preſerved Nine of Ninety Six that were in the Ship.

The Names of thoſe that ſurvived, are here ſet down, and can Witneſs to the Truth of this Relation; they are as followeth,

Arthur Holdſworth Captain, *Allen Geare* Chief Mate, *William Sanders* Second Mate, *John Beedol* Chirurgeon, *Samuel Penwel* Carpenter, *John Maddick*, *Thomas Foord*, *Elias Sweetland*, *William Langmead*.

Soli Deo Gloria.

BRITISH MUSEUM